

Subcommittee on
**International Terrorism
and Nonproliferation**

Chairman Ed Royce, 40th District California

Press Release

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Royce Statement on A.Q. Khan Network

WASHINGTON, DC -- Chairman Ed Royce (CA-40) made the following statement at the Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation hearing, "The A.Q. Khan Network: Case Closed?"

"The A.Q. Khan network has been described as the "Wal-Mart of private sector proliferation." Its handiwork has helped deliver to us two of the most threatening security challenges we face: North Korea and Iran. Khan, the so-called "Father of Pakistan's Bomb," for over a decade ran a sophisticated and multinational clandestine network, built around Pakistan's own nuclear weapons program, which provided advanced nuclear enrichment technology and expertise to these hostile countries, as well as to Libya, and perhaps others.

"In October of 2003, Italian authorities seized sophisticated centrifuge components bound for Libya aboard the *BBC China*, forcing the Pakistan government of President Musharraf to confront A.Q. Khan and his cohorts publicly. This should have been done years earlier. Khan's network has done incalculable and potentially catastrophic damage to international security. It has opened an era in which many states, including among the most unstable and most hostile to the U.S., can now expect to develop nuclear weapons. This is Khan's grim legacy.

"U.S. policy rightly attempts to work with, and pressure, the Pakistan government on counter-terrorism, proliferation and other concerns, but not to a destabilizing degree. The possibility of radical Islamists seizing control of Pakistan's government and nuclear arsenal is a serious concern. Four months after the *BBC China* was interdicted, Khan appeared on Pakistani national television and "apologized." The following day, President Musharraf apparently felt compelled to call Khan a "national hero." Or does he believe that? I wonder...

"This month, Pakistan released Mohammad Farooq, who allegedly was responsible for coordinating the Khan network's foreign supply activities. He was the last of twelve or so detainees being held for their network involvement. There have been no Pakistani prosecutions of Khan network members. Khan himself was pardoned by President Musharraf. That sent a very unfortunate signal to would-be proliferators.

"At the time of Farooq's release, the Pakistani Foreign Ministry announced in so many words that the Khan case was closed. It also said that Khan would remain off limits to foreign investigations, despite requests by the I.A.E.A., the U.S., and others to interview him. Pakistan receives some \$700 million annually in U.S. aid. President Bush has designated Pakistan a Major non-Nato Ally. Given this support, the grave consequences of Khan's acts, and his relevancy to the Iranian and North Korean crises of today, the U.S. and the international community should expect more from Pakistan's government.

"Khan claims to have acted without Pakistani government support, yet former Pakistani President Zia spoke about acquiring and sharing nuclear technology with "the entire Islamic world." Khan advanced Zia's mission well. Some of Khan's exports were transported on Pakistani military aircraft. Many ask how could the network aggressively market its nuclear products, including with glossy brochures, without Pakistan's government taking notice?

"Either the Pakistani government was complicit to some degree, or Khan was able to proliferate enrichment technology for years without attracting its attention. Both scenarios are deeply troubling. In light of what is now known about the Khan network, we should be gravely concerned about the security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. The idea that Pakistan should be offered the same civilian nuclear energy cooperation agreement being proposed for India is a non-starter.

"Some question whether the A.Q. Khan network is truly out of business, asking if it's not merely hibernating. We'd be foolish to rule out that chilling possibility. Vigilance and greater international pressure on Pakistan to air out the Khan network is in order."

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